



FET PHASE SUBJECT CHOICE & PROMOTION POLICY (2026)

1. DOCUMENT CONTROL

Policy Owner	SMT and Academic Head
Drafted By	SMT
Date of Approval	18 February 2026
Review Date	January 2027
Related Policies	Assessment and Academic Integrity Policy (2026); Admissions Policy (2026); Promotion and Progression Policy (2026); Language Policy (2026).

2. PREAMBLE AND ETHOS ALIGNMENT

At Loreto Convent School, subject choice is the first major step in discerning a learner’s vocation. It is not about “what is easy,” but about “where can I best serve?”

Guided by the charism of **Mary Ward**, this policy is anchored in:

- **Excellence:** We guide learners into subjects where they can flourish and achieve their personal best.
- **Sincerity:** We encourage learners to be honest about their aptitudes. Taking Mathematics Literacy is not a failure; it is a sincere choice for those whose talents lie outside the abstract sciences.
- **Truth:** We are committed to honest and transparent guidance. Our prerequisites and thresholds exist not to exclude learners, but to protect them from choices that would undermine their chances of success in the NSC. We share the reasoning behind every academic decision openly with the learners and families we serve.
- **Justice:** We ensure that every learner has access to a fair, transparent, and supportive subject choice process. Where learners have faced barriers — academic, personal, or circumstantial — these will be considered alongside their results. Every learner has the right to be heard before a subject decision affecting their future is finalised.
- **Freedom:** We believe in the freedom of the well-formed, well-guided learner to choose well. Our role is not to choose for learners, but to ensure they are equipped — with honest information, pastoral support, and self-knowledge — to make free and informed decisions about their own educational journey.
- **Accompaniment:** Consistent with our Catholic mission and the charism of Mary Ward, we walk alongside our learners through this process. Subject choice can be a moment of anxiety, uncertainty, or disappointment. Our response is always accompaniment — compassion, honest counsel, and a genuine belief in each learner’s capacity to flourish.

3. LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

This policy is drafted in compliance with:

- *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 — Section 9 (Equality, which underpins the equity provisions for oversubscribed subjects) and Section 29(2) (Right to receive education in the official language of choice where reasonably practicable, which provides the constitutional framework for the Afrikaans FAL requirement and the immigrant concession).*
- *National Senior Certificate (NSC) Regulations.*
- *National Curriculum Statement Grades R–12.*
- *GDE Circulars regarding Subject Changes and Immigrant Concessions.*
- *Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA, Act 4 of 2013).*
- *Promotion of Administrative Justice Act (PAJA, Act 3 of 2000).*

4. THE COMPULSORY CORE (GRADE 10–12)

All learners in the Further Education and Training (FET) Phase must take **7 Subjects**:

1. **English Home Language** (Compulsory).
2. **Afrikaans First Additional Language** (Compulsory, unless Immigrant Concession applies).
3. **Mathematics OR Mathematical Literacy**.
4. **Life Orientation**.
5. **Three Electives** (Chosen from the School's Timetable Blocks).
6. **Religious Education** (only up to Gr 11; Compulsory internal subject — Non-examinable for NSC).

5. SUBJECT GUIDANCE AND DISCERNMENT PROCESS

Subject choice is one of the most significant decisions a learner makes in their school career. At Loreto Convent School, this decision is supported by a structured, pastoral guidance process grounded in the school's commitment to discernment, honest self-knowledge, and accompaniment.

5.1. The Guidance Process

The subject choice process begins no later than Term 2 of Grade 9 and involves the following:

- An information session for Grade 9 learners and parents/guardians presenting all available subject combinations, prerequisites, career pathways and the school's recommendation criteria.
- Individual or small-group subject guidance consultations facilitated by the Grade 9 class teacher, relevant subject teachers and/or the School Counsellor.
- A formal subject choice form, completed by the learner and signed by the parent/guardian, confirming the chosen subject combination.

5.2. The School Counsellor's Role

The School Counsellor is available throughout the subject choice process to:

- support learners who are uncertain, anxious, or experiencing difficulty with the decision;
- support learners whose subject choice has been declined on prerequisite grounds, helping them understand the decision and explore alternatives; and
- mediate where there is disagreement between a learner's own discernment and parental expectations.

5.3. The Discernment Question

In keeping with the school's Catholic mission, the central question of the subject choice process is: "Where can I best serve? What has God made me for?" Academic performance is one guide; personal interest, strength of character, co-curricular gifts and sense of calling are also relevant. Subject choice conversations at Loreto Convent School attend to the whole person.

5.4. Dignity in Guidance Conversations

All subject guidance conversations, prerequisite notifications, and declined subject communications must be conducted sensitively, privately, and with full respect for the dignity of the learner and their family. Prerequisite limitations are never communicated in a manner that is dismissive, comparative, or publicly identifying.

6. PREREQUISITES AND GATEKEEPING

To ensure learners do not set themselves up for failure in the NSC exams, Loreto Convent School applies the following academic prerequisites for Grade 10 entry:

6.1. Mathematics

- Any learner who does **not meet the promotion requirement of 40% in Grade 9 (Term 4)** will automatically take Mathematical Literacy in Grade 10 so as to be progressed.
- **Requirement:** A learner must achieve a minimum of **50%** in Grade 9 Mathematics (Term 4) to take Mathematics in Grade 10. Learners achieving below 50% must take **Mathematical Literacy**.
- **Rationale:** Maths requires abstract reasoning foundations established in the Senior Phase.

Note: The 50% threshold for Grade 10 Mathematics is a standard set by Loreto Convent School in the academic interests of learners, above the statutory DBE minimum of 40%. It is applied to protect learner wellbeing and NSC outcomes, not to exclude. Parents who wish to dispute this threshold may do so through the appeal process in Section 8.

6.2. Physical Sciences

- **Requirement:** A learner must take Mathematics **AND** achieve a minimum of **55% (Term 4)** in Grade 9 Mathematics.
- **Rationale:** Physical Science relies heavily on high-level calculation. It cannot be taken with Mathematical Literacy.

Note: The 55% Mathematics threshold for Physical Sciences is a standard set by Loreto Convent School above the statutory DBE minimum, applied in the academic interests of learners given the

subject's high calculation demands. Parents may request a motivational review through the school's appeal process.

6.3. Accounting

- **Requirement:** A minimum of **50%** in Grade 9 Mathematics is strongly recommended.

Note: This is a school recommendation, not a statutory requirement. A learner who does not meet this recommendation may still apply for Accounting, subject to a guidance consultation and parental acknowledgement of the academic risk.

7. SUBJECT CHANGES

Subject changes are governed by strict Department of Education deadlines.

7.1. The “Drop” Policy

- **Mathematics to Mathematical Literacy:** A learner may move from Mathematics to Mathematical Literacy at any time in Term 1 and 2 when in Grade 10 or in Term 1 when in Grade 11, provided parents' consent in writing.
- **Mathematical Literacy to Mathematics:** This is **not permitted** as the curriculum gap is too wide to bridge after Grade 10 Term 1.

7.2. Deadlines (Statutory)

- **Grade 10:** Maximum 2 subject changes allowed. Deadline: End of Term 2.
- **Grade 11:** Maximum 2 subject changes allowed. Deadline: End of Term 1.
- **Grade 12: NO subject changes** are permitted. The subject set completed in Term 4 of Grade 11 is final for the Matric Exam.

7.3. The Procedure

1. Parent submits a formal letter to the Principal / Deputy Principal.
2. SMT reviews the request (considering timetable clashes and class capacity).
3. If approved, the learner is responsible for catching up on *all* work missed in the new subject.

8. APPEAL OF SUBJECT DECISIONS

1. Where the SMT declines a learner's subject choice application, declines a subject change request, or applies a prerequisite exclusion, the following appeal process applies:
2. The parent or guardian may submit a written request for review to the Executive Principal within five (5) school days of receiving the decision.
3. The written request must state the grounds for the appeal and any supporting information the parent wishes to be considered (e.g., evidence of extenuating circumstances, supporting documentation from a subject teacher or the School Counsellor).
4. The Executive Principal will convene a review meeting within ten (10) school days of receiving the request. This meeting will include the relevant Deputy Principal, the relevant subject teacher(s), and the School Counsellor where appropriate.

5. The Executive Principal will provide the family with a written decision and reasons within five (5) school days of the review meeting.
6. The decision of the Executive Principal following formal review is final at school level. Families retain the right to escalate to the relevant regulatory body if they remain dissatisfied.

9. SPECIAL CONCESSIONS

9.1. Immigrant Status

- **Eligibility:** Learners who entered the South African school system for the first time in Grade 8 or later.
- **Concession:** These learners may be exempt from Afrikaans FAL. They must substitute it with another approved subject (e.g., History/Business Studies) or an alternative language if offered.
- **Process:** Parents must apply to the SMT with passport/visa evidence.

Note: The immigrant concession for Afrikaans FAL is also addressed in the Language Policy (2026). The eligibility criteria and Grade 8 threshold in both policies are aligned. Any query regarding the language implications of this concession should be directed to the Executive Principal.

9.2. Class Size Limits

- Elective subjects (e.g., Consumer Studies, CAT) are subject to laboratory and venue capacity. Where a subject is oversubscribed, places are allocated on the basis of academic merit in the relevant subject area, subject to the following equity provision:
 - a) Before academic merit alone determines access, the SBST must be consulted for any learner whose academic record includes documented learning barriers, accommodations, or known socio-economic disadvantage. Where contextual factors have materially affected a learner's results, these must be weighed alongside the academic merit criterion.
 - b) The decision to decline a learner on capacity grounds must be communicated in writing, with reasons, and is subject to the appeal process in Section 8.
- Subjects with extremely low enrolment (e.g., fewer than 5 learners) may be cancelled at the discretion of the Board.
- Where a subject is cancelled due to low enrolment, affected learners must be offered priority guidance support and alternative elective options. No learner's subject set should be changed due to a cancellation without a guidance consultation and written parental consent.

9.3. Data Privacy (POPIA)

The collection and processing of personal information in connection with subject choice, concession applications, and FET academic planning — including academic records, subject choice forms, and immigration documentation — is governed by the school's Data Management and POPIA Compliance Policy (2026).

All staff involved in the subject choice process are required to handle personal information in accordance with that policy. Any queries regarding data privacy, access to records, or data breach reporting should be directed to the Information Officer (Executive Principal).

10. APPROVAL

Signed on behalf of the Board of Governors:



18 February 2026

Date: _____

Fatima Rawjee

Chairperson: Board of Governors

Signed by the Executive Principal:



18 February 2026

Date: _____

Suzette Truter

Executive Principal

ANNEXURE A: 2026 SUBJECT GROUPINGS

Core	Choice 1	Choice 2	Choice 3
English HL	Consumer Studies	Business Studies	Physical Science
Afrikaans FAL	Life Sciences	Life Sciences	Dramatic Arts
Life Orientation	Accounting	Geography	History
Maths / Maths Lit			CAT